

YOUTH RIGHTS IN PENNSYLVANIA: GOING TO SCHOOL

What documents will I need to enroll in school?

- 1) Proof of your date of birth (this can be a prior school record with your DOB)
- 2) Immunization record or assurance from your former school district that immunizations are up to date and are being sent.
- 3) Proof of residency (this can be a letter from your caretaker or case manager)
- 4) Parent Registration Form (this form can be filled out by your case manager if you are in care)

Does the school need to know if I am in out of home care?

NO. The school does not need to know that you are in care or why you are in care. To enroll you all the school needs is the documents listed above—nothing else.



How long should it take for me to be enrolled?

It should take no more than 5 days once you have submitted all of your documents.

What do I do if I am having trouble with enrollment?

If you are having trouble with an enrollment, you can file a complaint to the School Services Unit: Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Pennsylvania Department of Education, 333 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 19126. You should also contact your caseworker or lawyer. You should also call the Education Law Center at 215-238-6970 or visit them online at www.elc-pa.org. They can help you if you live anywhere in Pennsylvania.

What if I am being asked (or told) to leave school?

If you are suspended, expelled, moved to an alternative school, or placed in special education, you have rights. You may be entitled to a hearing, to a lawyer, or to an appeal depending on the situation. For more information, please contact a lawyer at [Education Law Center](http://www.elc-pa.org) at 215-238-6970. You can also access their school discipline fact sheets on their website www.elc-pa.org under "Publications and Materials"

Can I get back in school after dropping out?

You have a right to enroll or re-enroll in your neighborhood school until you are 21 or graduate from high school. You can also get a General Equivalency Diploma (GED) or attend an **accelerated** high school program **to make up credits**. It is never too late to further your education. Students in Philadelphia should contact the Re-Engagement Center by phone at 215-400-6700 or in person at 440 N. Broad St., Philadelphia, PA 19130 for help getting reconnected with a school program that will meet your needs.

Where do I go to school when I enter placement?

All efforts should be made to help you stay in the school you were in before placement. Or when your placement changes. If you are placed in a temporary shelter, **you have a right to stay in the same school you are in OR to go back to the school you attended before placement**. If your placement is in a new school district, you also have a right to go to school in the district where your placement is located. Even if there is a school on-grounds at your placement, you have a right to attend the neighborhood public school unless a judge has specifically requires you to go to the on-grounds school or when it has been placed in your Individualized Education Plan (IEP). For this to be in your IEP, all members of your IEP team, including you, need to agree to it based on your educational needs.

There are some situations where you may attend a school that is not a neighborhood public school. For example, you may be transferred to an alternative education school for a short time after having an informal hearing or the court may require you to go to a specific school or your IEP team may decide that you need to attend a special school that meets your needs. If you have questions about your education placement and other options such as cyberschool or charter schools call Education Law Center at 215-238-6970.

Juvenile
Law
Center